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BEN JONSON

NOTES ON *UNDERWOODS* XXX AND ON THE *NEW INN*

Underwoods XXX is an epistle written by Jonson to Sackville, Earl of Dorset, in acknowledgment apparently of money that the earl has sent him to relieve his necessities. Gifford tells us that it was the favorite poem of Horne Tooke, who knew it by heart and quoted it on all occasions. It is indeed an excellent piece of work, and Gifford rightly says that Horne Tooke's fondness for it "throws no discredit upon his judgment." No one, however, seems yet to have noticed that at least a third of the epistle is made up of passages taken from Seneca.

Lovell's discourse on "true valour" in the *New Inn* is directly connected with *Underwoods* XXX through the fact that certain important lines in it are almost identical with lines in the epistle. This fact was noted by Gifford, and Tennant, the latest editor of the *New Inn*, 1908, while taking note of the parallel, has endeavored (see pp. xlix ff.) to find the chief source for the discourse in Aristotle. Undoubtedly Jonson is in some measure indebted to that philosopher, but his debt to Seneca is much greater, and the discourse again is made up largely of direct quotations from his works; in one place Cicero is also laid under contribution.

Underwoods XXX, 1-4: If, Sackville, all that have the power to do
Great and good turns, as well could time them too,
And knew their how and where; we should have then
Less list of proud, hard, or ingrateful men.

De beneficiis I. i: beneficia nec dare scimus nec accipere. . . . Nec mirum est inter plurima maximaque vitia nullum esse frequentius quam ingrati animi. id evenire ex causis pluribus video: prima illa est, quod non eligimus dignos, quibus tribuamus . . . beneficia sine ullo delectu magis proicimus quam damus. . . . Multos experimur ingratos, plures facimus . . . nos illam [turbam ingratorum] augemus. . . .

5-6: For benefits are owed with the same mind
As they are done, and such returns they find.

De ben. I. i: reddit enim beneficium qui libenter debet. . . . Eodem animo beneficium debetur, quo datur.

7-12: You then, whose will not only, but desire
 To succour my necessities, took fire,
 Not at my prayers, but your sense; which laid
 The way to meet what others would upbraid,
 And in the act did so my blush prevent,
 As I did feel it done as soon as meant.

De ben. II. i: Optimum est antecedere desiderium cuiusque, proximum sequi.

II. ii: Molestum verbum est, onerosum, demisso vultu dicendum, rogo. huius facienda est gratia amico et cuicumque, quem amicum sis promerendo facturus, properet licet, sero beneficium dedit qui roganti dedit. Ideo divinanda cuiusque voluntas et, cum intellecta est, necessitate gravissima rogandi liberanda est: illud beneficium iucundum victurumque in animo scias, quod obviam venit.

13-14: You cannot doubt but I who freely know
 This good from you, as freely will it owe.

De ben. II. xxx: quoniam qui libenter beneficium accipit, reddidit.

"Libenter," i.e., "freely," is Seneca's customary adverb in speaking both of the action of giving and of that of receiving a benefit in the proper spirit.

15-22: And though my fortune humble me to take
 The smallest courtesies with thanks, I make
 Yet choice from whom I take them; and would shame
 To have such do me good I durst not name.
 They are the noblest benefits, and sink
 Deepest in man, of which when he doth think,
 The memory delights him more, from whom
 Than what, he hath received.

De ben. I. xv: Tunc iuvat accepisse beneficium et supinis quidem manibus, ubi illud ratio ad dignos perducit, non quo libet casus [cf. I. 30 below]. et consilii indigens impetus differt. quod ostentare libet et inscribere sibi. Beneficia tu vocas quorum auctorem fateri pudet? at illa quanto gratiora sunt quantoque in partem interiorem animi nunquam exitura descendunt, cum delectant cogitantem magis a quo quam quid acceperis?

II. xviii: Haec autem hoc primum censebit non ab omnibus accipiendum.

I. ix: Non quanta quaeque sint, sed a quali [dentur], prospiciendum.

22-32: Gifts stink from some,
 They are so long a coming, and so hard;
 Where any deed is forced, the grace is marred.
 Can I owe thanks for courtesies received
 Against his will that does them? that hath weaved
 Excuses or delays? or done them scant,
 That they have more oppressed me than my want?
 Or if he did it not to succour me,
 But by mere chance? for interest? or to free
 Himself of farther trouble, or the weight
 Of pressure, like one taken in a strait?

De ben. I. i: Quis nostrum contentus fuit aut leviter rogari aut semel? quis non, cum aliquid a se peti suspicatus est, frontem adduxit, voltum avertit, occupationes simulavit, longis sermonibus et de industria non invenientibus exitum occasionem petendi abustulit et variis artibus necessitates properantis elusit? In angusto vero compressus aut distulit, id est timide negavit, aut promisit, sed difficulter, sed subductis superciliis, sed malignis et vix exeuntibus verbis? Nemo autem libenter debet quod non accepit, sed expressit. gratus adversus eum esse quisquam potest, qui beneficium aut superbe abiecit aut iratus inpegit aut fatigatus, ut molestia caret, dedit? Errat, si quis sperat responsurum sibi, quem dilatione lassavit, expectatione torsit. . . . ne tarde quidem, quia, cum in omni officio magni aestimetur dantis voluntas, qui tarde facit, diu noluit.

The same topic is treated in I. vii, and at length in II. i.

For l. 28, cf. II. v:

Nihil aequè amarum quam diu pendere. aequiore quidam animo ferunt praecidi spem suam quam trahi. . . . Inde illae voces, quas ingenuus dolor exprimit: "*Fac, si quid facis*" et "*nihil est tanti: malo mihi iam neges.*" Ubi in taedium adductus animus incipit beneficium odisse, dum exspectat, potest ob id gratus esse?

With l. 30 cf. casus under 15-22 above, and see:

I. xv: neque enim cordi esse cuiquam possunt forte ac temere data.

The point is treated at great length in VI. vii-ix. In VI. xii, Seneca answers in the negative the question, Si quis sua causa nobis profuit, eine debetur aliquid?

33: All this corrupts the thanks.

The phrase is taken from the "*gratiam corrumpimus*" of *De ben.* I. i.

33-34: less hath he won
 That puts it in his debt-book ere't be done.

The general sentiment is everywhere in Seneca, but Jonson seems to have particularly in mind *De ben.* I. ii:

nemo beneficia in calendario scribit, nec avarus exactor ad horam et diem adpellat . . . turpis feneratio est beneficium expensum ferre.

35-36: Or that doth sound a trumpet, and doth call
His grooms to witness.

De ben. II. xi: Non est dicendum quid tribuerimus. . . . Ne aliiis quidem narrare debemus. qui dedit beneficium taceat, narret qui accepit . . . Quid opus est eloqui?

And for this sentiment and the pride which Jonson goes on to reprobate, see the last part of the same chapter:

Nihil aequè in beneficio vitandum est quam superbia. quid opus adrogantia vultus? quid tumore verborum? ipsa res te extollit. detrahenda est inanis iactatio: res loquentur nobis tacentibus. Non tantum ingratum, sed invisum est beneficium superbe datum.

37-38: In that proud manner, as a good so gained,
Must make me sad for what I have obtained.

De ben. II. xiii: O superbia magnae fortunae! o stultissimum malum! ut a te nihil accipere iuvat! ut omne beneficium in iniuriam convertis.

[42. For the expression "throw away" a benefit, cf. "proicimus" under 1-4 above.]

43 ff.: No more than he doth thank, that will receive
Nought but in corners, and is loth to leave
Least air or print, but flies it: such men would
Run from the conscience of it if they could.
As I have known some infants of the sword,
Well known, and practised borrowers on their word,
Give thanks by stealth, and whispering in the ear,
For what they straight would to the world forswear.

De ben. II. xxiii: Sunt quidam, qui nolunt nisi secreto accipere. testem beneficii et conscium vitant . . . ita accipienti adhibenda concio est: quod pudet debere, ne acceperis. Quidam furtive agunt gratias et in angulo et ad aures: non est ista verecundia, sed infitiandi genus. ingratus est, qui remotis arbitris agit gratias. . . . Verentur palam ferre, ut sua potius virtute quam alieno adiutorio consecuti dicantur.

51-52: And speaking worst of those from whom they went
But then fist-filled, to put me off the scent.

De ben. II. xxiv: Alii pessime loquuntur de optime meritis. tutius est quosdam offendere quam demeruisse, argumentum enim nihil debentium odio quaerunt.

75-78: I not deny it, but to help the need
Of any is a great and generous deed;
Yea, of the ungrateful: and he forth must tell
Many a pound, and piece, will place one well.

De ben. I. ii: Beneficia in volgus cum largiri institueris,
Perdenda sunt multa, ut semel ponas bene.

103 ff.: Cannot a man be reckoned in the state
Of valour, but at this idolatrous rate?
I thought that fortitude had been a mean,
'Twixt fear and rashness; not a lust obscene,
Or appetite of offending, but a skill
Or science of discerning good and ill.
And you, sir, know it well, to whom I write,
That with these mixtures we put out her light;
Her ends are honesty and public good;
And where they want, she is not understood.

Of course, the doctrine of the mean is characteristically Aristotelian (cf. *Nic. Ethics*, tr. Welldon, II. vii: "In regard to feelings of fear and confidence, courage is a mean state. On the side of excess, he whose fearlessness is excessive has no name, as often happens, but he whose confidence is excessive is foolhardy, while he whose timidity is excessive and whose confidence is deficient is a coward." See also the long discussion of courage in III. x), though it is not only Aristotle, but also Seneca, that Jonson has here in mind. In fact, he is quoting from *Ep.* 85. 28:

Non dubitarent, quid conveniret forti viro, si scirent, quid esset fortitudo. non est enim inconsulta temeritas nec periculorum amor nec formidabilium adpetitio; scientia est distinguendi, quid sit malum et quid non sit.

And when Jonson says that her ends are honesty and public good, he is simply in harmony with the whole spirit of Stoic ethics, according to which fortitude is one of the four cardinal virtues, and he who really possesses one of these possesses them all, since they are all but aspects of virtue herself. They are but different points of view from which she is regarded (see Arnold, *Roman Stoicism*, 1911, 293-94).

There are in fact two considerations which should have suggested to Tennant that Lovell's discussion of "true valour" in the *New Inn*, IV, iv, 38-222, did not arise mainly out of Aristotle. No doubt the doctrine of the mean at once directs our attention to Aristotle, and there is no doubt that Jonson had certain passages from the *Ethics* particularly in mind, as for example in the discussion of the valor of ignorance. But it is noteworthy that he allows "true valour" much less scope than Aristotle does, and more particularly is it important that his "true valour" is not Aristotle's "courage" (Aristotle means by courage practically what we all do when using the term), but once more the Stoic "fortitude." For that reason, as will be seen in what follows, Jonson feels that he can apply to "true valour" what Seneca says about *sapientia*. In short, the discourse on valour is made up, aside from the few lines having a direct source in Aristotle, of extracts from the *De ira* and the *De contumelia*. The point of contact between *Underwoods* XXX and the *New Inn* is found in the fact that ll. 105-8 of the former are practically repeated in the *New Inn*, IV, iv, 41-45; indeed the passage in the *New Inn* is even a somewhat closer translation of the corresponding Senecan passage:

A certaine meane 'twixt feare, and confidence:
No inconsiderate rashnesse, or vaine appetite
Of false encountring formidable things:
But a true science of distinguishing
What's good or evill.

And l. 110 finds its echo in *New Inn*, IV, iv, 113-14:

If any other
Respect be mixt, we quite put out her light,

wherein there is again an echo of Seneca *De ira* I. viii. 3:

aut quemadmodum ex confusione se liberabit, in qua peiorum mixtura praevaluit?

New Inn, IV, iv, 56-57:

If they [unworthy things] be done to us, to suffer them,
Is valour too.

Compare *Ep.* 67. 10:

illic est fortitudo, cuius patientia et perpressio et tolerantia rami sunt.

From 66 on we begin to accumulate our parallels with the two other pieces of Seneca mentioned above.

66: Vertue is never ayded by a vice

De ira I. ix. 1: numquam enim virtus vitio adiuvanda est se contenta.

67-68: What need is there of anger, and of tumult?

When reason can doe the same things, or more?

De ira I. xi. 2: Deinde quid opus est ira, cum idem proficiat ratio?

69-70: O yes, 'tis profitable, and of use,

It makes us fierce, and fit to undertake.

De ira I. vii: Numquid, quamvis non sit naturalis ira, adsumenda est, quia utilis saepe fuit? Extollit animos et incitat. Nec quicquam sine illa, etc.

Seneca treats the point at length, and in I. ix, directly attacks Aristotle's argument, which was to the effect of ll. 69-70:

Ira: inquit Aristoteles, necessaria est. nec quicquam sine illa expugnari potest, nisi illa inplet animum et spiritum accendit.

71-77: Why so will drinke make us both bold, and rash.

Or phrensie if you will, do these make valiant?

They are poor helps, and vertue needs them not.

No man is valianter by being angry,

But he that could not valiant be without:

So, that it comes not in the aid of vertue,

But in the stead of it.

De ira I. xiii: "Utilis, inquit, ira est, qui pugnaciores facit." Isto modo et ebrietas: facit enim protervos et audaces . . . isto modo dic et phrenesin atque insaniam viribus necessariam . . . et mortis timor. . . . Sed ira, ebrietas, metus aliaque eiusmodi foeda et caduca inritamenta sunt nec virtutem instruunt. quae nihil vitiis eget, sed segnem alioqui animum et ignavum paulum adlevant. Nemo irascendo fit fortior, nisi qui fortis sine ira non fuisset. ita non in adiutorium virtutis venit, sed in vicem.

78-79: And 'tis an odious kind of remedy,

To owe our health to a disease.

De ira I. xii. 6: abominandum remedii genus est sanitatem debere morbo.

(This is again used at the end of *Underwoods* VIII, where Jonson applies it to jealousy.)

We come then to an interesting passage, ll. 106 ff.

The things true valour is exercis'd about,
Are poverty, restraint, captivity,
Banishment, losse of children, long disease:
The least is death.

Tennant remarks, p. lv.; "Aristotle enumerates somewhat the same list of evils: 'We fear, in fact, all things that are evils, such as infamy, poverty, disease, loss of friends, and death. But of all things terrible death is the worst: it is indeed, the extreme of evils, since to the dead man, as it seems, nothing further can befall, whether good or evil.'" And in a note, Tennant objects to the reading "least" in l. 109, saying: "To follow Aristotle's reasoning, we must read *last* for *least*: The *last* is death. It is true that Jonson does not follow Aristotle's line of argument on some minor points: but it seems easier to believe this a printer's error than to receive it as a philosophical utterance." On the contrary, it is precisely a philosophical utterance, but not Aristotle's. It is most excellent Stoical doctrine. We need not cite the legion passages that could be brought forward to show that, for the Stoics, death was no evil and in fact a refuge from evils. The following lines are closely related to the present passage.

De cont. x. 4: Alia sunt quae sapientem feriunt, etiam si non prevertunt, ut dolor corporis et debilitas aut amicorum liberorumque amissio at patriae bello flagrantis calamitas.

115-17: And as all knowledge, when it is remov'd
Or separate from justice, is cal'd craft,
Rather then wisdom; so a minde affecting,
Or undertaking dangers, for ambition,
Or any selfe pretext, not for the publike,
Deserves the name of daring, not of valour.

Here we must turn aside for the moment from Seneca to Cicero *De officiis* i. 19:

Praeclarum igitur illud Platonis: "Non," inquit, "solum scientia, quae est remota ab iustitia, calliditas potius quam sapientia est appellanda, verum etiam animus paratus ad periculum, si sua cupiditate, non utilitate communi inpellitur, audaciae potius nomen habet quam fortitudinis."

135 ff.: He can assure himselfe against all rumour!
 Despaires of nothing! laughs at contumelies!
 As knowing himselfe, advanced in a height
 Where injury cannot reach him, nor aspersion
 Touch him with soyle!

De cont. x. 3—xi. 2: sapiens autem a nullo contemnitur. magnitudinem suam novit nullique tantum de se licere nuntiat sibi et omnis has, quas non misérias animorum, sed molestias dixerim, non vincit, sed ne sentit quidem haec vero minora ne sentit quidem nec adversus ea solita illa virtute utitur dura tolerandi, sed aut non adnotat aut digna risu putat habet pulcherrimam virtutem omnium [animi], magnanimitatem: illa quicquid eiusmodi est, transcurrit ut vanas species somniorum visusque nocturnos nihil habentis solidi atque veri. Simul illud cogitat, omnes inferiores esse, quam ut illis audacia sit tanto excelsiora despiciere.

148 ff.: The purpose of an injury 'tis to vex
 And trouble me: now, nothing can do that
 To him that's valiant.

De cont. v. 3: Iniuria propositum hic habet, aliquem malo adficere. Malo autem sapientia non relinquit locum. unum enim illi malum est turpitudine, etc.

150 ff.: He that is affected
 With the least injury, is lesse then it.
 It is but reasonable, to conclude
 That should be stronger, still, which hurts, then that
 Which is hurt. Now no wickednesse is stronger,
 Then what opposeth it.

De cont. viii. 2: Denique validius debet esse quod laedit eo quod laeditur. non est autem fortior nequitia virtute, etc.

155 ff.: Not Fortunes selfe,
 When she encounters vertue, but comes off
 Both lame and lesse.

De cont. viii. 3: Non habet ubi accipiat iniuriam. ab homine me tantum dicere putas? ne a fortuna quidem, quae totiens cum virtute congressa est, numquam par recessit.

159 f.: There may an injury
 Be meant me, I may choose, if I will take it.

De cont. vii. 3: Hoc loco intellegere nos oportet posse evenire, ut faciat aliquis iniuriam mihi et ego non accipiam.

And a few lines below:

si iniuriam accepi, necesse est factum esse. si est facta, non est necesse accepisse me.

161 ff.: But we are, now, come to that delicacie,
And tendernesse of sense, we thinke an insolence
Worse then an injury, beare words worse then deeds;
We are not so much troubled with the wrong,
As with the opinion of the wrong! like children,
We are made afraid with visors! Such poore sounds
As is the lie, or common words of spight.

De cont. v. 1-2: Dividamus, si tibi videtur, Serene, iniuriam a contumelia: prior illa natura gravior est, haec levior et tantum delicatis gravis, qua non laeduntur homines, sed offenduntur. tanta est tamen animorum dissolutio et vanitas, ut quidam nihil acerbius putent: sic invenies servum qui flagellis quam colaphis caedi malit et qui mortem ac verbera tolerabiliora credat quam contumeliosa verba. Ad tantas ineptias perventum est, ut non dolore tantum, sed doloris opinio vexemur, more puerorum, quibus metum uncutit umbra et personarum deformitas et depravata facies. lacrimas vero evocant nomina parum grata auribus et digitorum motus, etc.

166 ff.: Such poore sounds
As is the lie, or common words of spight,
Wise lawes thought never worthy a revenge.

De cont. x. 1: Est minor iniuria, quam queri magis quam exsequi possimus, quam leges quoque nulla dignam vindicta putaverunt.

169: ff. And 'tis the narrownesse of humane nature,
Our poverty, and beggery of spirit,
To take exceptions at these things. He laugh'd at me!
He broke a jest! a third took place of me!
How most ridiculous quarrels are all these?
Notes of a queasie, and sick stomach, labouring
With want of a true injury! the maine part
Of the wrong, is, our vice of taking it.
Lat. Or our interpreting it to be such.

De cont. x. 2-3: Hunc adfectum movet humilitas animi contrahentis se ob factum dictumque inhonorificum: "ille me hodie non admisit, cum alios admitteret. sermonem meum aut superbe aversatus est aut palam risit. et non in medio me lecto, sed in imo collocavit." et alias huius notae, quae quid vocem nisi querelas nausiantis animi? in quae fere delicati et felices incidunt. non vacat enim haec notare cui peiora instant. Nimio otio ingenia natura infirma at muliebria et inopia verae iniuriae lascivientia his commoventur, quarum pars maior constat vitio interpretantis.

178 ff.: If a woman or child
 Give me the lie, would I be angry? no,
 Not if I were i' my wits, sure I should thinke it
 No spice of a disgrace. No more in theirs,
 If I will thinke it, who are to be held
 In as contemptible a ranke, or worse.

De cont. xii. 1: Quem animum nos adversus pueros habemus, hunc sapiens adversus omnes.

And Seneca goes on to show that all insults are to be looked down upon just as are those of children. So in xiv:

Tanta quosdam dementia tenet, ut sibi contumeliam fieri putent posse a muliere.

Line 183 is a practically direct translation of a passage in Seneca that I well remember, but which I cannot at the moment find.

184 ff.: I am kept out a Masque, sometime thrust out,
 Made wait a day, two, three, for a great word,
 Which (when it comes forth) is all frown, and forehead.

Here of course, as we know from l. 184, Jonson is drawing on his own experiences; but the topic, and the kind of injuries spoken of, are evidently suggested by the very part of *De cont.* which Jonson translated in the preceding lines, for chaps. xiii, xiv are largely devoted by Seneca to a discussion of the injuries that great men and their vulgar attendants offer, frowns, delays, and the like.

200 f.: If light wrongs touch me not,
 No more shall great; if not a few, not many.

De cont. xv. 2: In quantumcumque ista vel numero vel magnitudine creverint, eiusdem naturae erunt: si non tangunt illum parva, ne maiora quidem. si non tangunt pauca, ne plura quidem.

202: ff. There's naught so sacred with us but may finde
 A sacrilegious person, yet the thing is
 No lesse divine, cause the prophane can reach it.
 He is shot-free, in battayle, is not hurt,
 Not he that is not hit. So he is valiant,
 That yeelds not unto wrongs; not he that scapes 'hem:
 They that do pull downe Churches, and deface
 The holiest, Altars, cannot hurt the God-head.

De cont. iii. 3-4: Nihil in rerum natura tam sacrum est, quod sacrilegium non inveniatur, sed non ideo divina minus in sublimi sunt, si existunt qui magnitudinem multum ultra se positam non tacturi adpetant.

Involnerabile est non quod non feritur, sed quod non laeditur: ex hac tibi nota sapientem exhibebo. Numquid dubium est, quin certius robur sit quod non vincitur quam quod non lacessitur, cum dubiae sint vires inexpertae, at merito certissima firmitas habeatur, quae omnis incursus respuat?

And iv. 2: Ut coelestia humanas manus effugiunt et ab his qui templa dirrunt ac simulacra conflant, nihil divinitati nocetur, etc.

210 ff.: A calme wise man may shew as much true valour,
Amid'st these popular provocations,
As can an able Captaine shew security,
By his brave conduct, through an enemies country.

De cont. iv. 3: immo nescio an magis vires sapientia ostendat tranquillitatis inter lacessentia, sicut maximum argumentum est imperatoris armis virisque pollentis tuta securitas in hostium terra.

214 ff.: A wise man never goes the peoples way,
But as the Planets still move contrary
To the worlds motion; so doth he, to opinion.

De cont. xiv. 4: non ita qua populus, sed ut sidera contrarium mundo iter intendunt, ita hic adversus opinionem omnium vadit.

217 ff.: He will examine, if those accidents
(Which common fame calls injuries) happen to him
Deservedly, or no? come they deservedly,
They are no wrongs, then but his punishments:
If undeservedly, and he not guilty,
The doer of them, first, should blush, not he.

De cont. xvi. 3: "utrum merito mihi ista accidunt an immerito? si merito, non est contumelia, iudicium est. si immerito, illi qui iniusta facit, erubescendum est."

194 ff.: For me now to be angry with Hodge Huffle,
Or Burst (his broken charge) if he be sawey,
Or our owne type of Spanish valour, Tipto . . .
Were just to make my selfe, such a vaine Animal
As one of them.

Here Jonson is applying to the persons in his play what Seneca says, *De cont.* xiv. 1, about the folly of taking offense at the actions of ostiarii, nomenclatores, cubicularii, etc.

This analysis of the material Jonson has made use of shows that he took little from Aristotle except the definition of courage and a few ideas like that concerning "ignorant valour." Upon these he grafted a large amount of Stoic morality from the pages of Seneca, thus transforming courage into fortitude and saying of fortitude

what in the pages of Seneca is often said of wisdom. The result, as a whole, is perhaps not to the credit of Jonson as a philosophical thinker, for it evidently troubled him little that the two systems of philosophy were inconsistent. Ben Jonson, like his namesake Samuel, and like other great moralists, Pope and Dryden, for instance, was not intended by Nature to reason philosophically. Of the four he had perhaps the most powerful intellect, at least in some respects; but he very probably would have seen nothing wrong in Johnson's method of refuting Berkeley. In any case, he was doubtless little concerned with pagan metaphysics, since all that had of course been once for all overturned by Christianity; perhaps on that account he felt that he need trouble himself little with such discrepancies. Might we compare his eclecticism with that of Cicero? At any rate, it was the art of life that he was interested in, and there he found the classics incomparable teachers, particularly Seneca, who appealed with such force and directness to all the men of the Renaissance, for reasons that are too obvious to need explanation.

In the remaining fifty or sixty lines of *Underwoods* XXX, I have noted nothing that seems to have its immediate source in Seneca or Stoic morality. The theme that Jonson treats, namely, that virtue is to be attained by assiduous practice and constant watchfulness, cannot be identified with any particular system of ethics. Aristotle tells us that we become virtuous by forming virtuous habits. The Stoics did not accept that statement as a matter of theory, but in practice they recognized a road to virtue which was in essence that of Aristotle. And it is of course in accordance with Christian ethics to say that we are made better by training in habits of right feeling and right action (naturally we leave out of consideration all academic questions of "sufficient grace," "necessary grace," and the like).

Perhaps it should be remarked that ll. 124-25,

Men have been great, but never good by chance
Or on the sudden,

seem to owe something in expression to the common tag, "Nemo repente fuit turpissimus," Juvenal ii, 83.

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